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Times will return to Nicaragua

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica — Glenn Garvin, correspondent for The Washington Times who was expelled last Friday from Nicaragua, will return to that country tomorrow following Managua's reversal of the decision, which it called a mistake by lower-level officials.

"I'm certainly glad that the [Sandinista] regime has relented," said Mr. Garvin yesterday. "My job is to report the news and not to get into confrontational situations with governments. I'd much rather be in Managua doing interviews and writing stories, than to be in San Jose lodging protests. So I hope we can put all this behind us.

"Since the Managua government has admitted that the expulsion was a mistake and unauthorized, I certainly expect that our confiscated property will all be returned," he said.

The Nicaraguan government late Tuesday, in reversing the decision, said the expulsion of Mr. Garvin and his colleague, free-lance photographer Sue Mullin, had not been cleared with higher authorities and that the journalists may return to Nicaragua.

Mr. Garvin and Miss Mullin, who had been accused by the Sandinistas of "espionage activities," will be allowed to return to Nicaragua "if they so desire," said an Interior Ministry statement.

The two were arrested by Interior Ministry security agents at a Managua hotel Friday, held for nine hours and deported, Mr. Garvin and Nicaraguan officials said.

The expulsion prompted the State Department to consider filing a formal protest with the Marxist Nicaraguan government, a spokesmen in Washington said.

It was thought to be the first time foreign reporters were expelled from Nicaragua since the 1979 victory of the Sandinista-led revolution, according to members of the Foreign Correspondents' Association.

There have, however, been several cases of reporters being barred from entering the country.

In Washington, D.C., Arnaud de Borchgrave, editor-in-chief of The Times, said he was "delighted" by the news, but would be "even more delighted to hear that the freedom of the press has been restored in Nicaragua, including an uncensored La Prensa." Mr. de Borchgrave said he doubted the statement that the expulsion decision had been taken by immigration workers.

"The government had already announced [Mr. Garvin and Miss Mullin] were being expelled because they were sympathetic to the anti-Marxist resistance and were suspected of having ties to the CIA. It was a government decision which has been reversed."

This article is based in part on wire service reports.

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